

TONTO National Forest



Recreation
Opportunity
Guide

Forest Service-Tonto NF



Verde River

Wilderness Area Use

The Verde River is now one of two Wild and Scenic Rivers in Arizona with the other river being Fossil Creek, which was designated in 2009. The Verde River starts at Sullivan Lake in the Big Chino Valley (south of Paulden) in Yavapai County, and flows generally south for 170 miles through private, state, tribal, and National Forest System lands to the confluence with the Salt River. The area of the Verde River between Childs and Sheep Bridge is part of the Mazatzal Wilderness area. A Wilderness Area is an area where the earth and its community of life are unchanged by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. To better preserve this unique Wilderness Area, certain restrictions apply. These restrictions include:

- Prohibition of wheeled and motorized equipment/transport
- Group size is limited to 15 persons
- Length of stay is no longer than 14 days
- No more than 15 head of livestock are allowed per group

Wild and Scenic River

Because of its diversity of fish and wildlife, as well as its remarkable scenic, historic, and cultural values, a portion of the Verde River--from Beasley Flat downstream to the confluence with Red Creek--was established in 1984 as Arizona's only Wild and Scenic River. The goal of the Wild and Scenic River system is to preserve the character of the river for future generations.

Hiking

The Verde River passes through a variety of ecosystems ranging from densely forested upland plateaus to canyons to desert lowlands, each with its own diverse plant life, animals, birds and fish. The hiking trails in these diverse areas range in skill level from easy to very difficult. For more information on hiking opportunities in the Verde River area, contact one of the forest districts listed below.

Considerations

- No permit is required for private parties to run the river. Certain circumstances may call for a Special Use Permit (traveling with an outfitter or guide, camping with 15 or more people, etc.)
- No trash service: **PACK IT IN, PACK IT OUT!**
- Treat and/or filter all the water you use at camp.
- The Verde River is a Class 3 whitewater river with one significant Class 4 rapids and is meant for experienced river runners.

Related Opportunities

Boating, hunting, fishing, birding, camping, picnicking and photography

Related Information

For search and rescue or in case of an emergency, contact: Yavapai County Sheriff's Office
(928) 771-3260

Forest Contacts

Tonto National Forest
2324 E McDowell Rd.
Phoenix, AZ 85006
(602) 225-5200

Cave Creek Ranger District
40202 N. Cave Creek Rd.
Scottsdale, AZ 85262
(480) 595-3300

Prescott National Forest
Verde Ranger Station
300 E Hwy 260
Camp Verde, AZ 86322-0670
(928) 567-4121

Coconino National Forest
Red Rock Ranger District
8375 State Rt. 179
Sedona, AZ 86341
(928) 282-4119